

Teaching of Christ, narrated for children



Lev Tolstoy

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PREFACE

Last year I have set up a small school of peasant children, ten to thirteen years old. I wanted to pass onto them the teaching of Christ in a way that would be clear to them and would have an impact on their life, and I told them, in my own words, those passages from the four Gospels that seemed to me the most comprehensible and easy for children to understand, and, at the same time, which are the most necessary for the moral guidance in their life. I observed children's restatements and the questions they asked. And the more I worked with them, the clearer it became to me which of the passages from the teaching they perceived easier and got attracted to. Based on that experience, I have composed this book. I think that the reading of it, chapter by chapter, together with the corresponding explanations of the need of applying the eternal truths of this teaching to life, must be beneficial for children, who, according to Christ, are especially receptive to the teaching on the kingdom of God.

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Jesus Christ, through his teaching and his own life example, taught people that the spirit of God dwells in every person. According to the teaching of Jesus Christ, all people's troubles arise because they focus their lives on their bodies, and not on the spirit of God. Because of that, they fight with each other, suffer in soul, and because of that they fear death.

The spirit of God is love. And love lives in the soul of every human being. If people focus their lives on the spirit of God – on love – then there will be no hatred, no mental torments, no fear of death. All people wish well-being for themselves. The teachings of Christ opens to people that the well-being comes to them through love, and that this well-being is available to all people. That is why the teaching of Christ is called Gospel: god means good, spell means to speak, - a good story.

(From the First Epistle of John the Evangelist 4, 7, 12, 16)

Questions

1. What Jesus Christ has opened to people?
2. What happens when people focus their life on body?
3. What is the spirit of God in human?
4. What will happen if people will focus the life on spirit?

Jesus was born from Maria, wife of Joseph. Until the age of 30, Jesus lived in Nazareth with his mother, father, and brothers, and, when he grew up, he helped his father with his carpentry work. When Jesus was 30, he heard that people went to listen to the sermons of a holy hermit. The hermit's name was John. And Jesus went with people into the desert to listen to the preaching of John. John told that a time has come for the kingdom of God, a time when all people will understand that they are all equal, that there is no one higher or lower, and that everyone should live in love and harmony with one another. He said that this time is close, but it will really come only when people will stop doing untruth. When ordinary people asked John: 'What should I do?' - He told that the one who has two pieces of clothing, should give one to a beggar; and the one who has food should share it with those who have not. To rich people John told to stop robbing others. To soldiers he told no to mug, be satisfied with what they receive, and not to curse. To the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees (*) he told to change their lives and repent. - 'Do not think,' - he told them, - 'that you are special people. Change your life, and change so that it would be visible by your acts that you have changed. And if you won't change, then you won't escape that what happens with a fruit tree when it brings no fruit. If a tree does not bring fruits, it is cut down for firewood; the same will be done to you, if you won't do good deeds. If you do not change your life, you all will perish.'

(* The Pharisees and Sadducees are representatives of religious and political groups in Ancient Judea; the first ones represented the interests of wealthy classes of the population and had that distinctive trait of special zeal in carrying out the rules of piety (figuratively, Pharisee means a hypocrite, phony), the second represented the highest priests, landowners and official nobles. The legalists, or scribes, is the class of people who have devoted themselves to the study and interpretation of the Jewish law.*)

John persuaded all people to be merciful, just, and humble. And those who promised to correct their life, John, as a sign of the change in their lives, bathed in the Jordan River. And when he bathed them, he told: - 'I cleanse

you with water, but to completely cleanse you only the spirit of God in yourselves is able. And the John's words that people should change their lives for the kingdom of God to come, and that people can be cleansed only by the spirit of God, these words have sunk down in the heart of Jesus. And in order to ponder on what he has heard from John, Jesus has not returned home, but stayed in the desert. And so he lived many days, thinking about what he had heard from John.

(Matthew. 1, 18; Luke 2, 51; 3, 23; Matthew 3, 1-13; Luke. 3, 3-14; Matthew 4, 1-2)

Questions

1. Where and in what family Jesus was born?
2. What did John preach to the people, to the rich, to the soldiers, to the Pharisees, and to the Sadducees?
3. How Jesus listened to the sermon of John and what words has touched his soul?
4. Where did he go after he heard John?

3

John told that, in order for the kingdom of God to come, people needed to purify themselves with the spirit of God. “What does it mean to purify yourself with the spirit of God?” - Jesus thought. – “If to cleanse by the spirit means to live not for your body, but for the spirit of God,” - Jesus thought, - “then truly the kingdom of God would come, if people lived by the spirit of God; because the spirit of God is one and the same in all people. And having all the people lived by the spirit, all people would be united, and the kingdom of God would come true. But people cannot live only for the spirit, people have to live for their bodies, also. But if they will live for their bodies, will serve body, take care of it, then they will all live apart, just as they live now, and the kingdom of God will never come. What can be done?”- Jesus thought. – “It’s impossible to live only by the spirit, yet to live by the body, as worldly people live now, is bad, and if continue to live this way, then everybody will live apart, and the kingdom of God will never come. What should I do? To kill myself in my body,” - thought Jesus, - “I can't, because the spirit dwells in the body, according to the will of God. To kill myself means to go against the will of God.” - And, having thought about it, Jesus said to himself: “It looks like I can’t live by the spirit alone, because the spirit lives in the body. I can’t live by the body alone, either, to serve the body, the way all people live. Neither can I rid of the body, kill myself, because the spirit lives in the body according to the will of God. What can I do? I can live in the body, as God wants it, but while living in the body, serve not the body but God.” And, having reasoned that, Jesus came out of the desert and went to towns and villages to preach his teaching.

(Matthew 4, 3-10; Luke 4, 3-15)

Questions

1. That did Jesus think after the sermon of John?
2. What would have happened if people lived by the spirit alone?
3. What happens when everyone lives for their body?

4. Why you can't get rid of your body?
5. How else should you live?

And rumors about Jesus spread in the area, and a lot of people began to walk behind him and listen to him. And he told people: “Remember, you went to listen John in the desert, why did you go to see him? People go watch someone in rich clothes, but those live in palaces, and there was nothing like this in the desert. Then why did you go to John, in the wilderness? You went there to listen to someone who taught you a good life, didn’t you? What did he teach you? He taught you that the kingdom of God must come, but that for it to come, so that there is no evil in the world, all people need to live not apart, each for himself, but so that everybody would be together, and so that all would love each other. So in order for the kingdom of God to come, you first need to change your life. The kingdom of God does not come by itself, it is not God who will arrange this kingdom, but you yourself should and can establish this kingdom of God, and you will establish it when you will try your best to change your life. Do not think that the kingdom of God will appear in a visible way. The kingdom of God cannot be seen. And if someone tells you: ‘it is here or there,’ don’t believe it and don’t go. The kingdom of God is not in time or place of any kind. It is everywhere and nowhere, because it is inside of you, within your soul.

(Matthew 11, 7-12; Luke 16, 16; 17, 20-24)

Questions

1. That did Jesus speak about the teaching of John?
2. That needs to be done for the kingdom of God to come?
3. Where is the kingdom of God?

Jesus clarified his teaching clearer and clearer. And once, when a lot of people gathered around him, he began telling them about how people should live, in order for the kingdom of God to come. He told: “The kingdom of God is totally different from the worldly kingdoms. It’s not the proud or the rich who will enter the kingdom of God. The proud and the rich reign now. They are having fun now, and now are praised and respected by everybody. But for as long as they stay proud and rich, and there won’t be the kingdom of God in their souls, they will not enter the kingdom of God. It is not the proud but the humble, not the rich but the poor who will enter the kingdom of God. But the humble and the poor will enter the kingdom of God only if the reason why they are humble and poor is not because they have failed to become famous and rich, but because they did not want to sin to become noble and rich. If you are the beggars only because you have failed to become rich, then you are like unsalted salt. Salt is only useful when it is salty; if it is not salty, it is already good for nothing, and it is thrown away. And so you are, if you are poor only because you were not able to become rich, then you're suited to be neither poor nor rich. And so above all, there is only one thing is necessary in the world: to be in the kingdom of God. Look for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you will have all you need. And don't think that I teach you something new; I teach the same wisdom that all sages and holy men taught you. I only teach how to implement what they taught. And in order to implement what they taught, you need to keep the commandments of God, - not just talk about them as false teachers do, but follow them. Because only he who follows the commandments of God, and by his own example teaches others to follow them, only he will enter the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5, 1-20; Luke 6, 20-26)

Questions

1. What makes the kingdom of God different from worldly kingdoms?
2. What people must be like, in order to enter into the kingdom of God?

3. What did Jesus teach?

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And Jesus said: “Here is the first commandment. The old law said: you shall not kill, and he who kills is sinful. But I say to you that if a man is angry with his brother, he is already sinful before God; he even more sinful when he says to his brother a rude, dirty word. So if you started to pray and remembered that you are angry at your brother, then, before you pray, go make peace with him, and if by some reason you cannot accomplish that, then extinguish the grudge in your soul against your brother. This is the first commandment.

Another commandment is this. It is said in the old law: you shall not commit adultery, and if you are separated with your wife, then give her a divorce. But I say unto you, that not only a person should not commit adultery, but if he looks at a woman with dirty thoughts, he already is sinful before God. In regards to divorce I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, he commits adultery himself, and provokes his wife into adultery, and provokes another one into sin whoever is going to marry the divorced one. This is the second commandment.

The third commandment is this. In your old law, it is said: don't break oaths, but keep your vows before God. But I say unto you, that you should not swear at all, and if you are asked about something, then say: ‘yes’ if it’s yes; and ‘no’ if it’s not. You must not swear by anything. Man is entirely in the power of God, and therefore he cannot promise in ahead that he’ll commit that what he swears. This the third commandment.

The fourth commandment is this. In the old law it is said: an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you that you should not pay with evil for evil, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. And if anyone strikes you on the one cheek, it’s better to turn him the other cheek than to answer with a kick for a kick. And if someone wants to take your shirt, then it is better to give away even a caftan, too, than to hate and to fight with your brother. Do not resist evil with evil. This the fourth commandment.

The fifth commandment is this. In your old law it is said: love people of your

nation, but hate people of foreign nations. But I say to you that we must love all people. If people consider themselves your enemies, and hate, curse you, and attack you, you should still love them and do good to them. All people are children of one father. All are the brothers, and therefore we must love all people equally. This is the fifth, and final, commandment.

(Matthew 5, 21-48)

Questions

- 1) What is the 1-th commandment?
- 2) What is 2nd?
- 3) What is 3rd?
- 4) What is 4th?
- 5) What is the 5-th commandment?

And Jesus told all the listeners about what will happen when they will follow his commandments. – “Do not think,” he said, “that if you won’t get angry at the people, if you will put up with everybody, will live with one woman, will not swear an oath or an allegiance to anyone, will fight against those who offend you, will give everything that will be asked of you, will love your enemies, - do not think that if you will live like that, then your life will be difficult or worse than you are living now. Don't think that way - your life will not be worse but will become a lot better than now. Our heavenly father gave us his law not to make our life worse, but so that we could have true life. Live by this teaching, and the kingdom of God will come, and you will have all that you need. God gave his law to birds and animals, and when they live by this law, they are well. And you'll be well if you will be fulfilling the law of God. I'm saying this not from myself, but this is the law of God, and this law is written in hearts of all people. If this law would not be giving people the well-being, God would not give it to them. The law, in brief, is to love God to love neighbor as yourself. And he fulfills this law who does to others as he wants others to do to him. And therefore whosoever hears these words of mine and fulfills them, he does the same thing as does a man who builds a house on the rock: this man is afraid of neither rain nor rivers nor storms, because his house is built on stone. But anyone who listens to my words and does not fulfill them, acts as a reckless person who builds his house on sand. Such house shall withstand neither water nor storms; it will fall and will get destroyed. And when Jesus finished saying these words, people were amazed at his teaching.

(Matthew 6, 26-33; 7, 24-28)

Questions

- 1) That will happen if you will be following the 5 commandments?
- 2) Why you should not be afraid that your life will get worse from the following of these commandments?

3) What is the law of animals, and what is the law of people?

4) What is the entire law, in short, and what is its fulfillment?

After that, Jesus began to convey to all the people in parables how they should understand the kingdom of God. The first parable he told was this. After a man sown seeds in his field, he is not thinking about them, and sleeps at night, and rises during the day, and does his work without worrying about how the seeds come up and grow. The seeds by themselves get swollen, sprout, turn to greens, grow to tube, to ear, ripe grain. And only when the harvest is ready, the master sends reapers to harvest the grains. The same way God does to establish the kingdom of God among people by force, but entrusted the people themselves to do this.

The second parable Jesus told was that if there is no kingdom of God within a person, then God will not accept such person into His kingdom, but leaves him in the world until the person himself becomes worthy of the kingdom of God. He said: - “The kingdom of God is like when a fisherman throws a fishnet into the sea and captures all kind of fish; having captured fish, he selects those which are wanted and releases the unwanted ones back into the sea.”

And he told even the third parable about this. A master sowed good seeds into his field. And the seeds began to grow, and bad grass grew among them as well. And the workers came to the master and said, ‘Have you not planted bad seeds? You have a lot of bad grass in your field. Send us there, we'll weed them off.’ And the master says: ‘Don't need to, because if you will start to weed the grass off, you will trample the wheat. Let them grow together. When harvest will come, then I will order the reapers to harvest the wheat, and to throw the bad grass away. The same way, God does not allow people to meddle with the lives of other people, neither does he meddle himself. Everyone can come to God only by himself, by his own efforts.

(Matthew 4, 26-29; Matthew 13, 47, 48, 24-30)

Questions:

1. What did Jesus convey to people in parables?
2. What was the 1st parable about?
3. What was the 2nd parable about?
4. What was the 3rd parable about?

In addition to those parables, Jesus also told a parable about the kingdom of God. He told: - When the seeds are sown in the field, not all seeds grow in the same way. But what happens with the seeds is: some seeds fall on the road, and birds fly in and peck them; there are seeds that fall on stony ground, and these seeds germinate, but not for long: there is no soil to give roots in, and their sprouts soon wither; and there are seeds that fall into the grass, and the grass chocks them. And there are those that fall into the good soil, and grow, and bring from one grain 30 or 60 grains. Similarly, there are people who don't accept the kingdom of God into their heart, the temptations of the flesh come to them and steal what was sown – these are the seed on the road. Seeds on the stony ground is when people at first gladly accept the teaching, but reject it when resentments and persecutions come because of the teaching. Seeds in the grass is when people understood the meaning of the kingdom of God, but their worldly cares and greed for riches suppress the meaning of the teaching in them. And the seeds on a good ground are those who understood the meaning of the kingdom, and accepted it in their hearts, - these people bring fruits, some 30-fold, some – 60, and some - 100. And whoever kept what was given to him, he receives a lot, but who did not retain, everything is taken away from him. Therefore, by all means try to enter into the kingdom of God. Do not regret anything, wish only to enter it. Do what the man did who, when he learned about where a large treasure was buried, sold all that he had, and bought the land where the treasure was, and became rich. Act the same way. Remember that even small efforts toward the kingdom of God bring great fruits: just like from a small seed a tall tree grows. Every man is able by his own efforts to enter into the kingdom of God, because the kingdom of God is within us.

(Matthew 13, 3-8, 12, 19-23, 31, 32, 44-46, Luke 16, 16)

Questions

1. What other parable Jesus told?

2. What is that parable about?
3. What does it mean?
4. How do you need to strive for the kingdom of God?
5. What do the efforts bring?

And, having heard these words, one Pharisee named Nicodemus came to Jesus and asked him: “How to understand that the kingdom of God is within us?” And Jesus said: “The kingdom of God is within us means that every person, in order to enter the kingdom of God, must be born again.” And Nicodemus asked: “How can a person be born again? How can man enter the belly of the mother again and be born?” Jesus said to him: “Be born again means to be born not by a fleshly birth, as a child is born from the mother, but to be born in spirit. And to be born in spirit means to understand that the spirit of God dwells in a person, and beside that every person is born from mother, he is also born from the spirit of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, it suffers and dies, but what is born from the spirit – is the spirit and lives by itself and can neither suffer nor die. God has put his spirit in people for them not suffer and die, but so that they may have joyful and everlasting life. And every person can have such life. And such life is the kingdom of God. And therefore the kingdom of God must be understood not like for all people at some time and at any place the kingdom of God would come, but so that if people recognize the spirit of God and live by it, then such people enter into the kingdom of God and do not suffer or die; if people don't recognize the spirit in themselves and live for the body, these people suffer and perish.

(John 3, 1-21)

Questions

- 1) What did Nicodemus ask Jesus?
- 2) What did Jesus answer?
- 3) What else did Nicodemus ask?
- 4) What did Jesus answer?

5) For what has God put his spirit in a human?

More and more people went after Jesus and listened to his teaching. And the Pharisees did not like it, and they started to think how to accuse Jesus before people. One Saturday Jesus went with his disciples across a field. The disciples plucked ears of wheat along the road, crushed them with their hands, and ate the grains. And according to the teaching of Jews God established a covenant with Moses so that people should not work on Saturdays at all, but should only pray to God. The Pharisees saw that Jesus' disciples plucked the ears of wheat on Saturday, stopped his disciples, and said to them: "You are not supposed to do that on Saturday. On Saturday you are not allowed to work, but you crush the wheat ears. It is stated in the law that one should be executed to death who works on Saturday." Jesus heard that and said: "A prophet said that God wants love, not sacrifice. If you would understand these words, you would not accuse my disciples. People are more important than Saturday." And Pharisees did not know what to respond to those words, and went silent.

On another occasion, Pharisees saw that Jesus came into the house of a tax collector Matthew, and had lunch together with everybody in his household. And those with whom he dined, Pharisees consider infidels (*). The Pharisees began to accuse Jesus: they told that it is illegal to dine with infidels.

(* Infidels are those who profess someone else's faith, different religion. *)

And Jesus said: "I'm teaching the truth to everyone who wants to learn the truth. You consider yourself being righteous and think that you know the truth, and therefore there is nothing else you can be taught. So, it is only possible to teach the infidels. And how will they learn the truth, if we do not get together with them?"

Then the Pharisees, not knowing what to answer, began to rebuke the disciples of Jesus for eating bread with unwashed hands. Themselves they strictly followed their instructions on how to wash hands and dishes. And regarding everything from the market, if it was not washed, they did not eat.

To these words Jesus said: “You blame us for not following the formalities of ablution when we eat, but what can defile a person is not what enters the human body. What defiles a person is that what comes out of his soul, because what comes out of the human soul are: evil, fornication, murder, theft, greed, malice, deceit, rudeness, envy, slander, pride, and all evil. All evil comes only from human soul, and only evil can defile a person. Let love to brothers be in your soul, and then everything else will be pure.

(Matt. 12, 1-8; 9, 9-13; Ll. 7, 1-5, 14-23)

Questions

- 1) What did the Pharisee think about the teaching of Jesus?
- 2) What were his disciples blamed for at first?
- 3) What did Jesus answer?
- 4) What were the disciples blamed for the other time?
- 5) What did Jesus answer?
- 6) What were the disciples blamed for the third time?
- 7) What did Jesus answer?

Once Jesus left the disciples and began to pray. And when he finished, the disciples approached him and asked, “Teacher, teach us to pray.” And he said to them: “First of all, make sure you pray not as it is often done – for people to see you and praise for it. If it is done that way, it is done for people, and so the reward comes from people. But there is no benefit for your soul from such prayer. However, if you want to pray, go to such place where nobody would see you, and there pray to your Father, and your Father will give you what you need for your soul. And when you pray, do not tell more than you need to. Your Father knows what you need, and even if you won’t say everything, he will give you everything that you need to your soul. First of all, pray for the Spirit of God in us to be hallowed; for the Kingdom of God to come into our soul; for us to live not by our own will, but by the will of God; for us not to wish superfluous but only our daily food; so that our Father would help us to forgive the sins of our brothers, and so that He would help us get rid of temptations and evil. Let your prayer be as this: ‘Our Father, who are in heaven! Hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us each day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, just as we forgive all those who have sinned against us; and deliver us from temptation and evil.’ That is how you need to pray, but if you want to pray, first think about whether you have grudge in your heart against anyone, and if you remember that you are in disagreement with somebody, then first of all go and make peace with whom you are in conflict, and if you can't find that person then eliminate the grudge in your own heart against him, and only after that you can pray. Only then your prayer will benefit you.

(Luke 11, 1; Matthew 6, 5-13; Luke 11, 25-26; Matthew 5, 23-24).

Questions

- 1) Who and when asked Christ about the prayer?
- 2) What way Christ did not recommend to pray?

- 3) Why you should not to pray that way?
- 4) Where and how one needs to pray?
- 5) What a prayer brings?
- 6) Why should you not say too much in prayer?
- 7) What do you need to pray for in the first place?
- 8) What is 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th to pray for?
- 9) What are the words of the prayer?
- 10) What should you do before praying?

Once it happened that Jesus came to have lunch with a Pharisee. And while he was sitting at the Pharisee's home, a woman came from the city. She was infidel. She learned that Jesus is in the house of the Pharisee, and she came there, and brought a bottle with perfume. And she knelt down at Jesus' feet, and burst into tears, and poured her tears over his feet, and wiped them with her hair, and poured the perfume from the bottle. Having seen that, the Pharisee was tempted and thought about Jesus: 'If this man were truly a prophet, he would know that this woman was infidel and dissolute, and would not allow her to touch himself.' Jesus understood what the Pharisee thought, turned to him and said: 'Should I tell you what I think?' – 'Go ahead, tell,' said the Pharisee. And Jesus said: 'Here's what: two people considered themselves in debt before a rich man, one owed him 500 rubles, and the other one - 50. And neither of them were able to return the debt. And the rich man forgave that to both of them. So, what do you think, who of the two will love the rich man more and take care of him?' And the Pharisee said: - 'Obviously, the one who owed more.' Jesus pointed out at the woman and said: 'So it is the same with you and this woman. You consider yourself a faithful and therefore in a little debt before God; she considers herself infidel and therefore in a big debt. I came to your house, you did not give me water to wash my feet, but she washes my feet with her tears and wipes them with her hair. You did not kiss me, but she kisses my feet. You did not give me oil to anoint my head, but she pours expensive perfume on my feet. She considers herself a great sinner, and therefore it is easy for her to love people. But you consider yourself a righteous and therefore it is difficult for you to love. But to the one who loves much, everything is forgiven.'

(Luke 7, 36-48)

Questions

- 1) What happened when Jesus dined at the Pharisee?
- 2) That the Pharisee thought?

3) What Jesus told him?

Another time, Jesus went through Samaria (*). He got tired and sat down by the well. And his disciples went to town to get some bread. And a woman from the village comes to get water. Jesus asked her to drink. And the woman says to him: “How come you, the Jews, do not communicate with us, Samaritans, but you ask me for a drink?” – And Jesus said to her: “If you would know me and what I teach, you would not say that, but would give me a drink, and I would give you to drink the water of life.

(* During the time of Jesus Christ, Palestine was divided into four main parts: Judaea, Samaria, Galilee, and Peraea; whose inhabitants were respectively called Jews, Samaritans, Galileans, Peraeans. *)

The woman didn't understand him and said: “Where will you take some other water? The only water here is in this well, of our father Jacob.” And he said to her: “Who will drink your water, he will get thirsty again, but who will drink my water, he will be always satisfied and will even start giving this water to other people.” The woman realized what he was talking about the divine, and says: “Yes, but I am Samaritan and you're Jewish, and therefore you cannot teach me. Our people pray on this mountain, and you, the Jews, say that the house of God is only in Jerusalem. And Jesus said: “That was before, but now the time has come when people will pray the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, but everyone will honor the heavenly Father not at either location, but in spirit and truth. God is spirit, and He must be honored in spirit and in truth.” The woman did not understand what he told her, and said: “I heard that a messenger of God will come, and he will explain everything. And Jesus said: “Woman, just understand what have I told you, and do not expect anything more.”

(John 4, 4-26)

Questions

1) Who has Jesus met at the well in Samaria?

2) What did the woman say?

3) What did he tell her?

Jesus went and preached in the towns and villages himself, but, in addition, he sent his disciples in those places where he wanted to go himself. He said to them: "Many people don't know the blessing of real life, and I feel sorry for all of them, and would like to open what I know to everyone. As a master is not able to handle the entire field and gets workers to harvest it, so do I. Go to different cities and proclaim the teaching of the kingdom of God everywhere. Tell people the commandments of the kingdom, and fulfill these commandments yourself. I am sending you like sheep amidst wolves. Be wise as serpents, and pure as doves. First of all, have nothing of your own, do not take anything with you: neither bag nor bread nor money, have only a dress on your body and shoes. And make no distinction between people, do not choose the hosts of places you enter. But to whichever first home you'll come, stay in there. When you enter a house, greet the hosts. If they will welcome you, come in; if they won't - go to another place. People will hate you for what you will say, and will attack you, and will chase you out from place to place, but don't lose heart. And when they will drive you away from one village, you go to another, and when from another, go to the third one. They will drive you out like the wolves chase sheep, but you don't be intimidated. And they will take you to courts, and beat you, and will bring you to their superiors so that you would defend yourselves in front of them. And when they will bring you to the courts and to the superiors, don't ponder about what to say, but know that the spirit of your Father lives in you, and it will tell what you need to say. People can kill your body. But to your souls they can do nothing, and so do not be afraid of people. But fear for your soul not to die together with your body, if you back away from the will of the Father, - that's what you should fear. No bird perishes without the will of the Father. Without his will, not a single hair will fall off your head. If you are in the will of the Father, what is there to be afraid of?

(Luke 10, 1-7; Matthew 10, 7-12, 16-31)

Questions

- 1) Where and why did Jesus send his disciples?
- 2) What did he command them to be like?
- 3) How did he tell them to act?
- 4) How did he tell them to tolerate everything?
- 5) Why should they not be afraid of anything?

The disciples he sent went one way, and Jesus with the rest of his students went to other towns and villages. And it happened that he came in one village. And one woman, called Martha, invited him into her house. He went in and began to talk, and Mary, the sister of Martha, sat by his feet and listened to him. And Martha hustled about food. And she saw that her sister Martha sits by Jesus' feet and listens to him. And she approached Jesus and said: "I am alone hustling around, but my sister sits and listens to you. Tell her to work with me. And Jesus said: "Martha, Martha! You care and hustle about many things, but only one is need. And Mary has chosen the one that is needed, which no one can take away from her. True life needs food not for the body but for the spirit." And about that Jesus told this parable. One man received a plentiful harvest of grains. And he thought to himself: now I will rebuild my barns, will build large ones, will gather there all my goodies. And then I will tell to my soul: this is for you, my soul, plenty of everything, relax, eat, drink, and live at your pleasure. And God said to him: you are stupid, this night I will take out your soul, and all that you have stored will be left to others. That's what happens with anyone who prepares for carnal life, rather than living for the soul. Only he lives true life who renounces his will and every moment is ready to carry out the will of God. But whoever cares about his carnal life, ruins the true life.

(Luke 10, 38-42; 12, 15-21; 9, 23-25)

Questions

- 1) How did Jesus happen to come to Martha?
- 2) What did Martha say?
- 3) What did Jesus answer?
- 4) What parable did he tell?

Once Jesus heard people telling that Pilate had killed the Galileans, and also that a tower has collapsed and crushed 18 people. In regards to that, Jesus told people: “What do you think, were those people especially guilty in something? We all know that those people were not worse than then we are. And what happened to them can at any moment happen to us. We all can die today or tomorrow. We cannot avoid death, so we should not treasure our carnal life, because we know that it will end soon anyway. We must preserve what never dies – the life of the spirit. And to that Jesus told this parable. A master had an apple tree in his garden. And the master says to his gardener: ‘I watch it for three years already, but this apple tree is still without fruit. You need to cut it down, because it only needlessly takes place.’ And the gardener says: ‘Wait some more time, master, let me till around it, add manure, and we’ll see it this summer. Maybe it will give fruit. And if it won’t give any fruit this summer, well, then we’ll cut it down.’ It is the same with us. While we live by the flesh alone and do not bring the fruit of the life of the spirit, our master does not chop us down, does not put us to death because he expects from us the fruit – the life of the spirit. And if we won’t bring the fruit, then we won’t escape death. To understand this, do not need any wisdom; each of us knows this himself. Indeed, it is not only about our household matters but also about what happens in the whole world that we can judge and predict. If wind blows from the west, we say it’s to the rain - and so it happens. And if south wind blows, we say it’ll be heat, and it comes true. Then how come we are able to recognize the weather but we can’t see ahead that we will all die and that we need to treasure not the dying life of flesh but the undying life of the spirit.

(Luke 13, 1-9; 12, 54-57)

Questions

- 1) What did Christ tell about Galileans and about death?
- 2) What was the parable about the apple tree about?

3) What does the parable relate to?

4) We're smart in everything, but what we do not understand?

And on another occasion, Jesus told people a parable about what human life is like. He said: "There was a rich man, and he had to leave his house. And before leaving, he called his servants and gave each of them by ten pounds of silver, and said: 'Work, each of you, on what I gave you while I'm away.' He said so and left. And when he left, the servants were free and lived as they wanted. And so, when this rich man had returned, he called his servants and ordered them to tell what each of them did with his silver. The first one came and said: 'Here, master, out of your pound of silver I made 10.' And the master told him: 'Well done, good servant, you had been faithful in small thing, I will put you over a big; be equal to me in all my wealth.' Another servant came and said, 'Here, master, on your pound of silver I earned five.' And the master said to him: 'Well done, good servant, and you be equal with me on my entire property.' And the third servant came and said: 'Here lord, is your silver, I wrapped it in a handkerchief and saved it at my place, because I know what kind of man you are: you take where you didn't put and gather where did not sow, and I was afraid of you.' And the master said: 'Stupid servant, I will judge you by your words. You are saying that out of fear of me you stored my silver and did not work on it? If you knew that I am strict and I take where I did not to put, so why didn't you do what I told you to do? If you would work on my silver, my property would grow, and you would fulfill what I told you. Now, you didn't do what I gave you the silver for, and therefore you can't own it.' And the master ordered to take the silver from the one who had not worked on it, and to give it to those who worked the most. And then the servants said to the master: 'Master, those ones have a lot already.' And the master said: 'Give it to those who worked a lot, because whoever takes care of what is entrusted to him receives more, but who does not - the remaining is taken away from him.' The same is with people's lives," said Jesus. "The rich master is the Father. The servants are people. The silver is the spirit of God in people. Just as the master does not work on his estate but orders every servant to work on what is given to him, so as the heavenly Father gave people his spirit so that they would increase it in themselves, so they would work on what was given to them. And rational

people understand that the life of the spirit is given to them so that they would serve the will of the Father, and they increase the life of the spirit in themselves, and become the participants in the life of the Father. But foolish people are like the stupid servants, they are afraid of losing their corporeal lives and carry out only their own will, and not the will of the Father, and therefore they lose the true life. Such people are losing what the most precious is - the life of the spirit. And therefore, there is no more harmful human error than to recognize your life in the body but not in the spirit. You have to be in concert with the spirit of life. Who is not in concert with it, he is against it. We must serve the spirit of life, rather than serving our body.

(Luke 19, 11-26; Matthew 25, 14-30; Luke 11, 23)

Questions

1. What did the master in the parable do before leaving, and what did his servants do when he was away?
2. What did the master do when he returned?
3. What does human life look like?
4. Who is the master, and who are the servants?
5. What do different people do and what does happen to them?

Once they brought children to Jesus. The disciples began to drive the children away. Jesus saw that and said: “Why do you chase the children away? You should not chase them away but to learn from them, because they are closer than adults to the kingdom of God. Kids don't swear, don't hold grudges, not have sex, not swear, don't sue anyone, and don't know the differences between their own nation and the others. Kids are closer than adults to the kingdom of Heaven. We must not drive the children away, but make sure we do not get them into temptations. Temptations ruin people by having lured them, under the guise of kindness and pleasantness, into the most harmful acts. Once a person yields to a temptation, he ruins both his body and the soul. And therefore, it is better to suffer in body than to fall into temptation. Like a fox, if it gets into a trap, it breaks her paw, just to save her whole self, so as for every man it's better to suffer in body than to yield to a temptation. Better for any part to die - not only for arm, leg, or even the whole body, - only not to fall in love with evil and not to get used to it. Woe to the world because of the temptations. Through the temptations, all the evil enters the world.

(Matthew 19, 13, 14; 18, 2-9; Luke 18, 17)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say to his disciples when they chased children away?
2. What must we guard children from?
3. What does the worst evil in the world come from?
4. What are the temptations?
5. How do we need to get rid of them?

And also Jesus said that of all the temptations, the most harmful is temptation of anger. Man gets angry with his brother for his sins and thinks that he, with this anger, can rescue his brother from his sins, but he forgets that no one can be the judge of a brother, because each of us is full of sins; and that before correcting brother, one should correct himself. Because we see the mote in the eye of brother, and see no chips in our own. And therefore, if you think that your brother has acted badly, then approach him, choose time and place to talk with him face-to-face, and tell him briefly what you have against him. If he listens to you, then he, instead of being your enemy, will become your friend. If he won't listen, take pity on him and do not deal with him anymore. And one of the students asked: 'And if he won't listen and will hurt me again? To forgive him again? And if he hurts me again, and again, and for the third, fourth, and seventh times, should I still forgive him?' And Jesus said: "Not only seven times, but seventy times seven, endlessly, because, as God forgives us all our sins if we repent in them, so we must endlessly forgive our brothers."

(Matthew 7, 1-5; 18, 15-22)

Questions

1. What is the most harmful temptation?
2. What constitutes this temptation?
3. What you need to do when you think your brother acted badly?
4. How many times do you need to forgive?

And also Jesus told about that this parable. He said: “One rich man began reckoning with his debtors. And a debtor who owed him thousands of rubles was brought to him. And he wasn’t able to pay the rich man. And for that the rich man could decide to sell the debtor's property, and his wife, and his children, and the debtor himself. But the debtor began to beg for mercy from the rich man. And the rich man pardoned him and forgave him the whole debt. And then this man’s debtor, a poor man, came to him and began to ask him to forgive his debt. But the debtor, whom the rich man has pardoned, did not have mercy on his own debtor, but demanded the immediate payment of the whole debt. And no matter how the poor man bowed or begged, the pardoned man hasn’t pardoned his own debtor, and instead he put the poor man in prison. People saw that, and went to the rich man, and told him what this man has done. Then the rich man called his debtor back and said to him: I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. And so you had to pardon your own debtor for what I have pardoned you. And what did you do? And the rich man filed a lawsuit against his debtor.

The same happens to us, if we do not forgive, from all our heart, those who are guilty before us. Any quarrel with our brother binds us, and distances us from our Father. And therefore, in order for us not to distance from God, we need to forgive our brothers and be in peace and love with them.

(Matthew 15, 23-35, 18, 19)

Questions

1. What is the moral of the parable about the master and the debtor?
2. What does the parable mean?
3. Why is it necessary to eliminate any quarrel?

Another time Pharisees came to Jesus and began to ask him whether a husband can leave his wife and take another wife. And Jesus said to them: “You know that a child can have only one father and one mother. That is established by God. And therefore people must not violate what was established by God. If a person violates what was established by God, and lets his wife go, and moves in with another, he does the triple evil – to himself, to his wife, and to other people. He does evil to himself by getting used to lewdness. He does evil to his wife when he leaves her by driving her to sin. He does evil to other people by seducing them through setting a bad example of the adultery.” And the disciples said to Jesus: “It is too hard to live with one wife. If one has to live with one wife until death, regardless what kind of person she might be, then it is better not to marry at all.” And Jesus told them: “You could not marry; but only if someone wants to live without his wife, then he has to be completely clean and not to think about women. It’s good for someone to live that way, but who cannot do that, he has to marry and live with one wife until death and not be seduced by other women.”

(Matthew 19, 3-12)

Questions

1. What is the female seduction?
2. Why no one should change wives?
3. What is the evil, if a man divorces his wife?
4. What did Jesus' disciples respond to his words?
5. And what did Jesus answer them about that?

Once the collectors of church donations approached Peter and asked him: “What about your teacher, will he pay what is expected?” Peter said that he will pay. And, Jesus, having heard that, said to Peter: “What do you think, Peter, from whom does the king take dues – from his sons or from strangers?” Peter said “From strangers.” “So, if we are the sons of God, then we don't have to pay dues. But in order not to temp them, give it to them, but not because we have to pay, but only to avoid driving them into sin.”

Another time the Pharisees got together with royal officials and came to Jesus to take him at his word, whether he would refuse from the obligations before the king. They said to him: "As you teach everything based on truth, tell us, do we have to pay taxes to the king or not?" Jesus said to them: “Show me with what you pay your dues to the king.” They showed him a coin. On the coin there was an image of the emperor. Jesus pointed to this image and said: “Give to the king what belongs to the king; only what is of God, your soul, do not give to anyone except God. Money, property, labor, give all of that to anyone who will ask you of that, but do not do for anybody anything that is contrary to the law of God.”

(Matthew 17, 24-27; 22, 15-22)

Questions

1. How did the collectors ask Jesus to donate for the church?
2. What did he say?
3. How did the Pharisees test Jesus in regards to dues to the king, and what did Jesus say?

It happened once that Jesus' disciples entered a village and asked for a permission to stay there overnight. But no one let them in. And the disciples returned to Jesus and told him about that and said: "Such evil people deserve to be killed by thunder." And Jesus got upset and said: "You still don't understand what spirit you are of. I teach not how to ruin, but how to save people. How is it possible to desire evil to a closed one? The same spirit of God lives in every person, the same as in you, and therefore you should not desire evil to happen to that very same which in yourselves."

Another time scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman taken in adultery, put her in front of him and said, "Teacher, this woman was taken in adultery, and according to the Law of Moses someone like her should be stoned. What will you say?" They asked that in order to test him. If he would say that this woman must be beaten by stones, that would be contrary to his teaching of love to all; however, if he would say don't need to do that, he would have said what is contrary to the law of Moses. But Jesus did not answer them and only stood, bowed low, and scrabbled something with his finger on the ground. They asked him again about the same. Then he looked up and said to them: "You are saying that by law you must beat her with stones, - then do it, but let the one who knows no sin after himself throw the first stone." And, having said this, he lowered his head, and again scrabbled with his finger on the ground. Prosecutors began to walk away one after the other, and only Jesus stayed there, and the woman. And Jesus looked up and, having not seen anyone except the woman, said to her: "Apparently, no one has condemned you?" She said: "No, Lord!" "And neither do I condemn you," Jesus said. "Go, and don't sin anymore."

(Luke 9, 52-56, John 8, 3-11)

Questions

1. What did students say about those who did not let them in?
2. What did Jesus say?

3. How did they bring a woman to Jesus?
4. What did he say to the Pharisees?
5. That did the woman say?

Jesus taught people that all people are the children of one Father, and therefore the entire law of God is in the love for God and for the closed one. And one law maker, knowing this, wanted to take Jesus at his word and to show him that not all people are the same and that people of different nations cannot equally be the children of God. And he asked Jesus: "You teach that we need to love our neighbor. But who is my neighbor?" And Jesus answered him by this parable. He said: "There was a rich Jew. And it so happened that when this Jew this was returning home, he was attacked by robbers; they have beaten him, robbed and dumped him on the road. A Jew priest passed by; he saw the beaten Jew, but did not stop and walked past. A Jew Leviticus (*) passed by and also saw the beaten one and also passed on. And a man from a foreign nation, Samaritan, walked by the same road. And this Samaritan saw the beaten Jew and did not think that Jews considered Samaritans not the closed ones but the strangers and the enemies, but took pity of the Jew, lifted him up, took him on his donkey to a hotel, washed him, bandaged his wounds, paid money for the hotel, and left only when he was no longer needed to the beaten man."

(* Leviticus was a priest, served in a temple. *)

"You are asking, who is the neighbor?" Jesus said. "The one who has love, who regards every human being as his neighbor, regardless of what nation he is from."

(Luke 10, 25-37)

Questions

- 1) How did the law maker want to trick Jesus?
- 2) Who is the neighbor?

And Jesus' teaching was spreading further and further. And Pharisees got angrier and angrier at him. They told people: "Don't listen to him. He deceives you. If all will live by his commandments, there will be more evil than it is now." Jesus heard that and said to them: "You're saying that if I teach people not to seek wealth but to be poor, not to get angry, not to repay an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but to endure everything and love everybody, that I drive evil by evil, and that if people would follow my teaching then their life will be worse than before. You're saying that in place of previous evil there will be new evil. But this is not true. I do not replace one evil with another, instead, it is you who exile evil with evil. You exile evil by threats, vows, killings, but evil is still not destroyed. And it cannot be destroyed, because no force can destroy itself. But I exile evil not with what you do. I exile evil with good. I exile evil by persuading people to follow those commandments that will save them from any evil.

(Matthew 12, 24-28)

Questions

1. What did the Pharisees talk about Jesus' teaching?
2. What did Jesus tell them about their teaching?
3. What did Jesus say about his teaching?

Once Jesus' mother and brothers came and they could not come close to Jesus because there was a lot of people around him. And one person saw them, came to Jesus and said: "Your family, your mother and brothers, are standing outside, wanting to see you." And Jesus said: "My mother and my brothers are those who know the will of the Father and follow it. For every human being, the will of our Father, God, should be more important than the father and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, and all of the property, and the fleshly life. Because, in worldly matters, every reasonable person, when he starts anything, will count whether it is profitable what he does, and if it is profitable, he does it, and if unprofitable – drops. If someone wants to build a house, then, before starting, he will sit and consider how much money is required, how much he has, and whether it'll be enough to finish, so that he wouldn't begin building something that he cannot finish and would only waste both efforts and time. And every king, if he wants to go to war, first will think if he can, with 10 000, go to war against 20 000. If he finds out that he cannot, then he will send ambassadors and make peace, and will not fight anymore. In the same way, every person needs to understand that everything he considers to be his own: family, and property, and his life itself, today-tomorrow will be taken away from him. And that the only thing that is his own and can never be taken away from him is the life of his spirit, and so he can only able and must care about the life of his spirit."

And, having heard that, one man said: "It's good if there is the life of spirit. But what if we'll give away everything, but there is no such life."

To that, Jesus said: "Everyone knows that the life of spirit exists and it is the only one that never dies. You all know this, but you don't do that what you know, - not because you doubt, but because you get distracted from the true life by the false cares."

And he said this parable about that. "A master has prepared lunch and sent his workers to call guests, but the guests began to refuse. One said: 'I bought land, need to go see it.' Another said: 'I bought bulls, need to plow.' The

third said: 'I got married, will I have a wedding.' And the workers came back and told the master that no one comes. The master then sent to call homeless. The homeless have not refused and came, and feasted on the luncheon. The same is with people. People recognize their life of spirit only when they have no cares of the flesh."

(Luke 8, 19-21; Matthew 12, 46-50, Luke 14, 26-33, 15-24)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say, when his mother and brothers came to him?
2. What is more important – the live of the body or the life of the spirit?
3. What did one person say about the life of the spirit, and what did Jesus answer?
4. What distracts from the spiritual life?
5. What is the parable about the feast?

Once a man came to Jesus, fell on his knees before him and said: "Blessed teacher, tell me, what should I do to get eternal life?" Jesus said: "Why do you call me blessed? No one is blessed except God alone. You know the commandments, follow them." And the man said: "Commandments are many. Which ones?" And Jesus said: "Do not kill, do not have lust for sex, don't lie, don't hurt anyone, honor your father and mother." And the man said: "These commandments I follow from my youth." Jesus looked at him, loved him, and said: "There is one thing that you lack - sell all you have, sell and give that to the poor." And the man got confused and walked away in silence, because he had a lot of possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples: "Here you can see how hard it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." The disciples were horrified at these words, and Jesus reiterated and said: "Yes, kids, it's hard, hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." And they got terrified even more and spoke among each other: "If we rid of everything, how we'll live after that, - we'll freeze, die of hunger." Christ said: "It only seems so scary to a man of flesh, but to a man of spirit it is easy. Anyone who will believe in this and test it, he'll know that this is true."

(Mark 10, 17-27)

Questions

1. What did the rich man ask Jesus about?
2. What did Jesus answer?
3. What did the students say?
4. What did Jesus say?

And Jesus added: “You cannot serve two masters at once: God and wealth, the will of the Father and your own volition. It must be one of two: serve one or the other.” And the Pharisees heard that, - and the Pharisees loved the wealth and laughed at these words of Jesus. And Jesus said to them: “You think because people revere you for your wealth, that you are indeed honorable. No, God does not look at what is outside, but He looks at the heart. That what is high before people, an abomination before God. There are not the rich who enter the kingdom of God but the poor.”

Jesus knew that the Pharisees believed that after death some people go to hell, the others - in heaven, and told them this parable about the riches. He said: “There was one man, who was very rich; he showed off every day, dressed in nice dresses, and entertained himself. And at the same place lived a beggar, a man full of sores, named Lazarus. And Lazarus used to come to the rich man’s yard, hoping to get some leftovers from the rich man’s table; but there were not even scraps left for Lazarus, as rich man’s dogs ate everything up, they even licked Lazarus’ sores. And then both men died: Lazarus, and the rich man. And in the hell, the rich man saw Abraham from far away, and saw that Lazarus was sitting with him. So the rich man says: ‘Abraham, father, I don’t dare to bother you, but I see Lazarus is sitting next to you, the one that rolled under the fence. Send him to me, let him dip his finger in water and give me to moisten my throat, because I’m burning on fire.’ But Abraham says: ‘For what would I send Lazarus to you in the fire? You had everything you wanted in that world, but Lazarus only saw grief. And I would not mind doing what you ask, but it is impossible. There is no communication between you and us.’ Then the rich man says: ‘If so, then at least, father Abraham, send Lazarus to my home. I have five brothers left, I feel so sorry for them. Let him tell them what wealth causes, so that they would not get in the same torment as I have.’ But Abraham said: ‘They know that by themselves. Moses and all the prophets have told that.’ And the rich man said: ‘Still, it would be better if someone from the dead resurrected and come to them, they’d sooner change their minds.’ But Abraham said: ‘If they

didn't listen to Moses and the prophets, even if the dead is resurrected, they wouldn't listen.'

(Luke 16: 13-15, 19-31)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say?
2. What did Jesus respond to the ridicules of the Pharisees?
3. What is the parable of the rich and Lazarus about?

After that, Jesus went to Galilee and lived there with his family. And at the day of the Jewish holiday of Tabernacles, Jesus' brothers prepared to go to the celebration and began to call Jesus with them. They did not believe in his teaching and told him: "So, you're saying that Jewish service to God is wrong and that you know the real service to God by deeds. If you really think that you know something that nobody else knows except you, so come with us to the celebration, a lot of people will be there, declare your teaching in front of all the people. If everybody will believe you, then your students will see that you are right. Because why to hide. You are saying that our service to God is false, that you know the true one, so, show it to everybody." And Jesus said to them: "There is time for everything. I'll go when the time is right." And his brothers have left, but he stayed. And there were a lot of people at the celebration, and people argued about the teaching of Jesus. Some told that his teaching is true, and others told that he only confuses people. In the middle of celebration Jesus himself came to Jerusalem and entered the temple. In the hallway of the temple were cattle - cows, bulls, rams, and nets with pigeons, and behind benches – money changers sat with money. All of that was used by people to bring sacrifices to God. And Jesus, having entered the temple and seen a lot of people, first drove cattle away from the temple, and let all the pigeons go, and scattered the money of the changers. And then he told everyone: "Prophet Isaiah said: 'The house of God is not the temple in Jerusalem, but the world of all people of God'. And the prophet Jeremiah also said: 'Do not believe false speeches that this is the house of the Eternal, do not believe that, but change your lives and do not judge falsely, don't oppress a stranger, widow, orphan, don't spill innocent blood, and don't come into the house of God, saying: 'Now we peacefully can do evil.' Don't make a den of robbers out of my house. I, God, do not rejoice in your sacrifices, but I rejoice in your love toward each other.'" Understand what these words of the prophet mean: 'a living temple is a world of all people, when they love each other.' You need to serve God not in a temple, but by life in the spirit and good deeds."

Everyone listened, and marveled at his speeches, and asked each other where he, without studying, knows all this from. And Jesus, having heard that everybody marveled at his speeches, said: "My teaching is not mine, but of the One who sent me, because he who makes things up by himself, seeks glory among men, but who is looking for what He, who sent him, wants, he is just, and there is no unrighteousness in him. I teach you only the fulfillment of the will of the Father. If you'll start fulfilling this will, then you'll learn that I haven't made up what I say, and that this teaching is from God." And many people said: "They say that he is a false prophet, but he says everything clearly, and nobody says anything against him. Only we cannot believe that he is the Messiah, the Messenger of God, because it is said: 'When the messenger of God will come, no one will know where he came from,' but we know him and all his relatives." Then Jesus said to them: "You know where I am from by flesh, but you do not know where I am from by spirit. You don't know whose I am in spirit, and it is only Him that you need to know. If someone would tell you that I am the Messiah, you would have believed me, a man; yet you don't believe the Father who is in me and in you. And you must believe only the Father.

(John 7: 1-29; 2: 13-16; Matthew 21: 13; 12: 7)

Questions

1. That did the Jesus' brothers say?
2. What did he answer?
3. What did people speak at the celebration about the teaching of Jesus?
4. What has he done in the temple?
5. What was he saying?
6. What were the people saying?
7. What did Jesus answer them?

And many people, having seen all this and heard him, told: he is definitely a prophet. Others told: he is the Messiah, and the others told: can the Messiah come from Galilee? It is said in the Scripture that the Messiah would come from the seed of David from Bethlehem, from the place where David was from. And the argument started, and the agitation began among the people. And then the chief priests (*) sent officers to seize him, but the officers have not dared to take him. And when they returned to the chief priests and Pharisees, the Pharisees said to them: ‘Why have not you brought him?’ – And the officers answered, ‘No one man has ever spoken like this man.’ - The Pharisees told them “Have you also got deceived? Have you seen any of the superiors or of the Pharisees believing him? It is only the damn people who got to believe in him. And people are ignorant about the law.

(* The high priest is the first, or chief priest *.)

And everybody has returned back to their homes. But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and stayed there with his disciples, and in the morning came again into the temple, and again a lot of people came to listen to him. And he taught them again. He said: “My teaching is the light of the world. Who will adopt it, he will not walk in darkness, but will clearly see what's good and what's bad. I teach what my Father spirit, who sent me, teaches everyone.” They asked: “Where is your Father?” He said: “If you knew me, you would know my Father, also.” And they asked him: “Who are you?” He said: “I am that spirit which had no beginning and will have no end. I am a human son, but I recognize the spirit of God to be my Father. When you raise the human son in you, then you will know what I am, and then you’ll realize that I do nothing on my own, but I do and say just what the Father has taught me.

(John 7: 40-49, 53; 8: 12-29)

Questions

1. What did people talk about Jesus?

2. What did the Pharisees talk about?
3. What did Jesus spoke when he returned to Jerusalem?
4. What did Jesus answer to the question: 'where is your Father'?
5. What did Jesus answer to the question: 'who is he'?

And Jews surrounded him and said: “All that you’re saying is hard to understand and does not match our Scripture. Don’t torture us, and tell us directly: “Are you that Messiah, who, according to our Scripture, must come into the world?” And Jesus answered them: “I already told you who I am, but you don't believe. Do what I say, then you’ll understand who I am and what I came for. Who goes with me and does what I say, - who understands my teaching and fulfills it, - he connects with me and with the Father. I and the Father are one.” And Jews got insulted by these words and picked up stones to kill him. And he asked them: “For what do you want to kill me?” They said: "We want to kill you because you, a man, is making yourself God.” And Jesus answered them: “I said that I am the son of God and I am connecting with the Father when I am doing his will. He who recognizes himself as the son of God, he ceases to be a slave, and receives eternal life. And just as a slave doesn’t always live in the house of the master but the son of the master does, so as a person, when he lives by the spirit, connects with the Father and lives forever. Verily I say unto you, he who shall follow my word, he will never see death.” And then the Jews said to him: "Now we learned that the demon is within you. Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead, but you say that who keeps your word, won’t ever see death. Are you greater than our father Abraham? Abraham is dead, and the prophets are dead, but who shall keep your Word, he will not die.” And Jesus said: — “Verily, verily, I say unto you: before Abraham was, I am.”

Jesus talked about the spirit of God which lives in him, and lives in every person, and which has no end, no beginning. But they did not understand that. The Jews did not know what to do with him, and could not indict him. So he went again across Jordan and stayed there.

(John 10: 24-38; 8: 34-59)

Questions

1. What did Jesus answer to the question: ‘Is he the Messiah?’

2. What the Jews said to that and what did they want to do?
3. What did Jesus say?
4. What did Jesus say about death?

And once, when Jesus was returning to Jerusalem, his two disciples, James and John, approached him and said: “Teacher! Promise us to do for us what we will ask you to do.” He said: “What is it you want?” They say: “Make us equal with you.” But Jesus said: “You do not know what you ask for. Everyone can, by his own efforts, enter the kingdom of the Father, but nobody can do it for another.” And Jesus called the other disciples and told everyone:

“Worldly people, kings and superiors consider among themselves, who of them is higher, and who is lower. But you should not have neither senior nor junior among you: the greatest among you will be the only one who will be a servant to all. Who wants to be first among you, must regard himself as the last, because, according the will of the Father, the son of man lives not to be served, but for himself to serve everybody and to give his bodily life for the life of the spirit.

(Mark 10: 35-45)

Questions

1. What did the disciples ask of Jesus?
2. What did he tell them?
3. What did he say to all the students?

And to that Jesus told this parable. He said: “Once an master came out early morning to hire workers for his vineyard; and, having made an agreement with workers on one grivna per day, he sent them to his vineyard; then he came out at about breakfast time and met other workers without job and told them: you, too, go work in my vineyard, and I will give you what’s right. They went. He came out again around lunchtime, and in the afternoon, and have done the same. And in the evening he found some more people without job and told them: ‘Why are you standing here without work all day?’ They said: ‘No one has hired us.’ And he said: ‘You, too, go to my vineyard, and I’ll pay you what’s right.’ When time came to pay, the owner says to his manager of the vineyard: call the workers and give them equal pay, starting with the most recent and up to the first. And the ones that came in the evening, have received by grivna. But those who came first, thought they would receive more, but they, too, received by one grivna. And these, the first ones, began to grumble at the master of the vineyard and said: ‘Those have worked one hour, and we spent the whole day from the morning, and you made them equal with us.’ But the master said to them: ‘You shouldn’t complain. Haven’t we made an agreement on one grivna? Then take what you earned, and go. And if I want to give the same to the last ones as to the first, then am I not in my power to do what I want? You are offended because I am kind, and you are envious of your brothers. This is not good.’ The same is with people: sooner or later a person will perform what God wants from him. All get the same, the last and the first.

(Matthew 20: 1-16)

Questions

1. How did the master hire workers?
2. How did he pay them?
3. What did the workers say?
4. What did the master say?

5. What does this parable mean?

And Jesus told another parable about the same. He said: "One man had two sons; and the youngest son wanted to separate from the father and said: 'Father, give me my share.' And the father gave him his share. This young son took his share and went off to foreign land. And at the foreign land, he had wasted all his possessions and began to live in poverty. And fell so low that he had to take the job to feed swine. And the only food he ate was acorns, the same that pigs ate. And the he pondered about his life and said to himself: why have I walked away from my father. My father had a lot of everything, even my father's workers eat well. But I'm here eat the same food as pigs. I better go to my father, bow to him in the feet and say: 'Father, I am guilty before you and don't deserve to be your son. Take me as your worker at least.' He thought so and went to his father. And when he approached the house, his father saw him, recognized him, and went out to meet him, hugged and kissed him. And the son said: 'Father, I am guilty before you, I don't deserve to be your son.' Father did not answer these words, but only ordered workers to bring the best clothes and good boots, and told his son to get dressed in everything good. And also his father commanded to kill the best calf. And when all was ready, the father told his household: 'this son of mine was dead, but now he became alive; he was lost but now is found. Let us celebrate this happiness.' And when everybody sat at the table, the older son came from the field and saw that they celebrated something at the house; he called a worker and asked: 'What are we celebrating?' And the worker said: 'Didn't you hear - your brother is back, and your father rejoices.' The older brother got offended and didn't go into the house. And his father came out to him and began to call him. But the older son didn't come and said to his father: 'For how many years I've been working for you, and there was not a single order that I have disobeyed, but you have never cut the best calf for me. But the youngest brother left home, squandered all the possessions with drunkards, and now you're doing such a feast for him.' And the father said the older son: 'You are always with me, and all mine is yours. And you should not be offended, but should rejoice that your brother was dead, and now became alive, was lost but now is found.' That's what God does to all

people, when sooner or later they return to the Father, and enter the kingdom of God.

(Luke 15: 11-32)

Questions

1. How did the youngest son separate from his father, and how did he live?
2. How did he return?
3. How did his father meet him?
4. What did the older brother say?
5. What did the father answer?
6. What does this parable mean?

And once Jesus asked his disciples: “Tell me, how people understand my teaching?” And they said: “Some think that you teach the same as John taught; others say that you teach the same as Isaiah taught; still others say that your teaching is like the teaching of Jeremiah, and that you are the prophet.” “Well,” Jesus said, “and how do you understand my teaching?” And Simon Peter said to him: “I think you teach that the spirit of God dwells in every human being, and that therefore every man is the son of God.” And Jesus said to him: “Happy you are, Simon, that you understood it. A human could not open that to you, but you understood it because God lives in you. It is not I, by my own words, who opened it to you, but God, my father, has opened it to you directly.”

And at that time Jesus said to his disciples that in Jerusalem he will not be able to escape attacks and insults from people who do not believe in his teaching, yet that even if they kill him, they will only kill his body, but they won't kill the spirit of God, which lives in him. Having heard these words, Peter got sad, took Jesus's hands, and said to him: "Do not go to Jerusalem." Jesus said: “Don't not say that. If you are afraid for me of the tortures and death, it means that you're not thinking about what is of God, but think about what is human's. In this life, people have to suffer if they live for the kingdom of God, because the world loves their own, and hate godly ones. It has always been that way, that the worldly people tortured those who performed the will of the Father.”

And, having called people with students, Jesus said: “He who wants to live according to my teaching, let he abandon his carnal life, and let he be ready for any sufferings, because he who is afraid for his physical life, he would ruin the true life, and who will give his carnal life, he will save the true one. And he who wants to fulfill my teaching, let he do it not in words but in deeds.”

And to that he told this parable. “A man had two sons, and the father said to the first son: ‘Go work in my garden,’ but the son said: ‘I don't want to, but

after, having repented, went.’ And then the father came to the second son and said the same. And the second son said: ‘Coming now,’ but did not go. Which one of them have fulfilled the will of the Father?” And the disciples answered: “The first one.” And Jesus said: “So and I say unto you, that debauchers and harlots will more likely enter the kingdom of God than those who talk but do not do.

(Matthew 16, 13-17, 21-25; 21, 28-31)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say about what would happen to those who would fulfill his teaching?
2. What will happen with these people?
3. What did Peter say to him?
4. What did Jesus answer?
5. What parable did he tell?

And then the disciples said to Jesus: “Your teaching is difficult. Increase in us the belief that we will be well if we live according to your teaching.” Jesus has realized that the students wanted to know about the reward for good life. And he said to them: “Faith is not in the belief in a reward, but faith is in clear understanding of what life is. If you understand clearly that your life is in the spirit of God, then you're not going to wait for the reward. The master will not thank a worker for doing what he was supposed to do. And the worker, if he understands that he is a worker, doesn't get offended at that, but works and knows that he will get what he deserves. So as you, fulfill the Father's will, and understand that you are workers, and if you have done what was expected of you, then do not expect a reward but be satisfied with what you receive. You should not worry about receiving a reward, but care not to destroy the life which is given to you, carry out the will of the Father. And therefore, always be ready, as servants when they are waiting for the master. Servants do not know when the master will return, early or late, and should always be ready. It's the same with life. Always, every minute you must carry out the will of the Father, without telling yourself: ‘I'll do something then or there’. So, always live in spirit in the present. There is no time for the life of the spirit. Watch after yourself, don't burden yourself or fog your brain by drunkenness and carnal cares, but make sure that the spirit of God always rules over your body.

(Luke 17, 5-10; 12, 36-40; 21, 34)

Questions

1. What did the disciples ask for?
2. What did Jesus say about faith?
3. What parable did he tell about that?
4. How and why should you live in the present?

And Jesus told another parable about how people should live. He said: “An owner has planted a garden, tended it, done everything for the garden to give as much fruits as possible. And he sent workers in this garden to work, collect fruits, and pay him a share. The deadline came, and the owner sent an employee to collect fruits, but the workers forgot that it’s not them who planted and arranged the garden, and they drove the messenger of the owner away with nothing, and lived in the garden as if they were owners, without thinking that the garden is not theirs and that they lived in it by the mercy of the owner. Then the owner sent another, senior, servant to remind the workers about the payment. The workers chased this one away, too. Then the owner sent his son. But the workers thought that if they would kill the owner’s son, then he’ll leave them alone. And they killed him. What else can the owner do? There is nothing left rather than to kick the workers out and to bring others.

The owner is the Father; the garden is the world; the workers are people; the payment is the life of spirit; the messengers of the master are the holy people who remind the rest people that they must live not for the body but for the spirit. The lost people think that life is given to them for their bodily pleasures rather than for the fulfillment of the will of the Father, and they kill the life of the spirit in themselves, and therefore lose life.

(Mark 12, 1-9)

Questions

1. What parable did Jesus say?
2. How did the owner arrange the work in the garden?
3. What did the workers think and do?
4. What can the owner do?
5. What does this parable mean?

After that, Christ came to Jerusalem again, and in the temple he began to speak to people about wrong life of the Pharisees. He said: “Beware of the teaching of scribes, the self-proclaimed teachers. Beware of them, because they took place of the true teachers, prophets. They self-willingly took the power to preach the will of God to people. They only talk, but do not do what they say. They want to be teachers, and for that they try to show off: dress, glorify themselves, yet they don’t do anything. Don't believe them. Know that no one should call himself a teacher. These self-proclaimed Orthodox teachers think they can lead to God by the superficial cremations, oaths, and they don't see that the external means nothing, that everything valuable is in human soul. They do the easiest, outer, but what is necessary and difficult - love, mercy, truth – they leave out. They only want to be superficially in law, and to bring others to the law superficially. And because of that, they are like painted coffins: clean on the outside but stink from the inside. They venerate saints and martyrs superficially, too. But in fact, they are those who tormented and killed the saints. They were before and are now the enemies of all that is kind. All the evil in the world comes from them, because they hide the good, and call evil good. And this should be feared the most, because you know yourself that any error can be corrected, but if people are mistaken in what is good, then this error cannot be corrected. And that is exactly what these self-proclaimed pastors do.

Then Jesus said: “I wanted to unite all people here, in Jerusalem, so that people would live loving each other and serving each other, but these people only know how to kill the teachers of good.”

And Jesus went away from the temple. And Jesus said: “It is true, I say to you, that all this temple and all its decorations, everything, will be destroyed and nothing will be left from it. There is one temple of God, it is the hearts of the people when they love each other.”

And they asked him: “When will be such a temple?” And Jesus said: “It will not be soon. For long time yet people will deceive others using my teaching,

and because of that there would be wars and tribulations. And there will be great crime, and there will be lack of love. But when all people will understand the true teaching, there will be the end of evil and temptations.”

(Luke 20, 46; Matthew 23, 1-39; Mark 3, 28-29; Matthew 24, 1-14)

Questions

1. How did Jesus reprimand the Pharisees?
2. What did he want to do in Jerusalem?
3. What did he say about the temple?
4. What did he say about the time when people will unite in truth?

And scribes and Pharisees, with all their power tried to destroy Jesus; they gathered in the council and began to decide how to do it. They said: “We must stop this person. He proves his teaching in such a way, that if we leave him alone, everybody will believe in him and will abandon our faith. By now already half of the people got to believe in him. And if everybody will believe in his teaching, that all people are children of one Father and that all are the brothers, and that there is nothing special in our Jewish people that would stand them out from other people, then the Romans will come and take us, and there won’t be Jewish Kingdom anymore.” And scribes and Pharisees consulted for long time. They wanted to kill Jesus, to get rid of him, but they were afraid of people and did not dare to do that. Then their high priest named Caiaphas said this: “You shouldn’t be so afraid. Sometimes, you need to kill one person to preserve the entire nation. So now, if we don’t stop this person, then the whole nation will perish. Even if the nation won’t perish, still, the people will scatter and abandon our only true faith, and therefore you shouldn’t be afraid but must kill Jesus.” And when Caiaphas said that, all agreed with him and decided to kill Jesus. They’d take Jesus right away and kill him, but Jesus was not in Jerusalem, and they did not know where he is. But when the Easter holiday (*) approached, then the Chief priests decided that Jesus with people will likely come to the celebration, and they ordered their servants to bring Jesus to them when they see him.

(* Easter is spring Jewish and Christian holiday; for Jews, it coincided with the feast of Unleavened Bread *.)

And they were right, six days before Easter, Jesus said to his disciples: "Let’s go to Jerusalem.” But the disciples knew that the Chief priests wanted to kill him, and began to ask him not to go to Jerusalem. They said to him: “Chief priests decided to beat you with stones. If you come, they’ll probably kill you.” Jesus said to them: “Only he stumbles and falls who walks in the darkness; if a person walks in the daytime, when there is light, then such a person doesn’t stumble. He who lives in the light of God’s will, doing what God wants, he cannot make mistakes. Such a person cannot fear anything.

Let's go to Jerusalem." And they got ready and went.

(John 12, 47-57, 7-10)

Questions

1. What were scribes and Pharisees concerned about?
2. What did Caiaphas say?
3. What have the Chief priests decided?
4. What did the disciples say to Jesus?
5. What did he tell them?

When in Jerusalem people discovered that Jesus was coming, they came out to meet him, surrounded him, put him on the donkey, and people ran before him, ripped branches off the trees, threw them on the road, and screamed: “Here he is, our true King! He taught us the true God.” And that way Jesus entered Jerusalem. And people asked: “Who is this?” And those who knew him, answered: “This is Jesus, the Prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.” When Jesus approached the temple, he came down from the donkey, entered the temple and began to teach the people. And the Pharisees and the bishops saw all that, and told each other: “See, what this man does. The whole nation goes after him.” They wished to take him right then, but did not dare to do so, fearing people, and they still wondered how to do this and not to agitate people. And Jesus, without interference, taught people in the temple.

Among people, beside Jews, there were pagans (*), Greeks. Greeks heard about the teachings of Jesus, that it was not only for Jews but for all people, and wanted to hear it. They told Philip about that. And Philip told Andrew.

(* Pagan is an idolater, a follower of paganism (Paganism is the name of the ancient religions advocating polytheism). *)

The disciples were afraid to get Jesus with the Greeks. They were afraid that Jews might get angry at Jesus for not recognizing the differences between Jews and other people, and at first were hesitant to tell Jesus about what Greeks asked for, but then told him. Having heard that Greeks wanted to become his disciples, Jesus got confused at first. He knew that if he won't make difference between Jews and Gentiles, then Jews will get angry at him. But he immediately came to his senses and said: “There is no difference between Jews and Gentiles; one and the same son of man is in all people. Even if I die because of this, but it's time to recognize the human son as common spirit of God in all people. Wheat grain only brings fruit when it dies itself. The same is with human, he brings fruit only when he gives his life for the fulfillment of the will of God. He who loves his bodily life, diminishes his spiritual life; but he who is willing to give his bodily life,

receives the spiritual one. My soul is struggling now, whether I will give in to the considerations of temporal life, or will fulfill the will of the Father. And so, now, when the time came when I have to do that for what I was sent into the world, can I really say: 'Father, rescue me from what must I do?' I can't say that, and I say: "Father, manifest yourself in me so that I may glorify the human son and unite all people together."

And to these words Jews said to him: "We know that Christ should come, but we don't understand what does it mean to glorify the human son?" And Jesus said: "To glorify the human son means to live by the spiritual light. And the spiritual light is in all of you. To raise the human son above the earthly one is to believe that the spirit of God dwells in every person. Who believes in my teaching, he believes not me, but he believes the spirit of God; and the spirit of God gives life to the world and lives within each of you. And he who understands my teaching, knows this spirit, because that spirit lives in him and gives life to the world. If anyone hears my words and does not understand them, I don't blame him, because I came not to accuse, but to save. He who does not understand my words, he does not believe in the spirit of God, because what I say, I'm not saying from myself, but from the spirit of the Father. And the spirit of the Father lives in me. Everything I say is what this spirit told me." And, having said this, Jesus went away and disappeared again from the Chief priests.

(Matthew 21, 7-12, John 12, 19-36, 44-50)

Questions

1. What did Jesus tell in the temple about what is going to happen to him?
2. What did he said about his teaching?

Among those who have heard these words of Jesus, many of the powerful and rich people believed in the teaching of Jesus, but were afraid to admit that before the Pharisees, because none of the Pharisees accepted the teaching of Jesus. They did not accept the truth, because they got used to believe worldly teaching, rather than godly. And the Chief priests and the scribes gathered again in the courtyard of Caiaphas. And began to conspire how to take Jesus in secret away from people and to kill him. They were afraid to capture him openly. And to their meeting one of the first disciples of Jesus, Judah Iscariot, came and told them: "If you are afraid to take Jesus openly, before people, then I'll find time when there will be few people with him, and will show you where he is, and then you can take him. What are you going to give me for that?" - They promised him thirty pieces of silver. Judas agreed and since that time he has begun choosing the time when to bring the high priests to Jesus, to capture him. Meanwhile, Jesus left Jerusalem again, and only his disciples were with him. When the first holiday of "unleavened bread" approached, the disciples said to Jesus: "Where we will celebrate the Passover?" And Jesus said: "Go somewhere in the village, enter the first house, and tell them that you don't have time to prepare for the Easter, and that you are asking to let you in, to celebrate the holiday." The disciples did that, went to the village, in the village they asked to come in the first house, and the owner let them in. And when they came - Jesus and the twelve disciples, including Judah - they all sat down at the table to celebrate the Easter. Jesus knew that Judas Iscariot promised the Pharisees to extradite him for death, but he didn't want to repay evil for evil to Judas and to expose him in front of all disciples, as Jesus the whole his life taught his students love, and also now he wanted to soften the heart of Judas only by love. And so, when he and all the twelve disciples were already sitting at the table, Jesus took bread, broke it into twelve pieces, gave each of the students by piece, and said: "This is my body, take it and eat it." And then he poured some wine into a bowl, passed it to the disciples, and said: "Drink, all of you, from this cup, this is my blood." And when they, one after another, drank wine from the cup, he said: "Yes, this is my blood. I am spilling my blood for the sins of

the world.” And, having said that, Jesus stood up from the table, removed his upper clothes, girded with a towel, took a water jug, and said that he will now wash the disciples’ feet. First, he came to Peter, but Peter distanced himself and said: “How can a teacher wash the feet of the disciples?” But Jesus said to him: “It seems strange to you, why would I want to wash your feet, but you’ll now know why I do it. I do it because although you are clean, but not all of you.” With these words, Jesus hinted at Judas. And Jesus washed feet of all disciples, including Judas. And when he finished and got dressed, he turned to all the disciples, and said: “Did you understand now why I did that? I did that so that you would always do the same to each other. I am your teacher, do that so you know how to act with those who does evil to you. If you understand that and will do that, you will always be well.” And, having said this, Jesus got sad and said: “Yes, yes, one of those whose feet I washed, will betray me.” And the disciples began to look at each other and did not know who he was talking about. One student was sitting next to Jesus. Simon Peter nodded to him to ask Jesus about whom he said that. He asked. And Jesus said, “This is the one to whom I’ll pass a piece of bread.” And he passed a piece of bread to Judas Iscariot and said to him: “Do what you want to do, do quickly.” At first, no one understood what the words of Jesus meant, but Judas understood them and, as he took the piece, he right away stood up and went out, and when the disciples realized what it was, it was already too late, and they could not chase him, because there was a dark night. And when Judas left, Jesus said: “Children! Little time has left for me to be with you. Don’t ponder about my teaching, but, as I told the Pharisees, do what I do. I give you a new commandment: just like I always, till the end, loved you all, you always, till the end, love each other and all people. In this commandment is all my teaching. Only by fulfilling this commandment, you will be my disciples. Love each other and all people.

(John 12, 42, 43; Matthew 26, 3-5, 14-28, John 13, 2-35)

Questions

1. Who has got to believe in the teaching of Jesus?
2. How did the Chief priests conspire?
3. What did Judah promise?

4. How did Jesus command to organize the Passover?
5. How did Jesus hint to Judas?
6. What has Jesus done to the disciples?
7. How did he save Judas from the anger of the disciples?
8. What commandment did he give to his disciples?

And Jesus said to his disciples: “The purpose of life is to strive to become as perfect as possible as God is. This is the only way. I go by it, and you know this way.” Then Thomas told him: “No, we don't know where you're going, and therefore we cannot know the way.” Jesus said: “I am going to the Father, and my teaching is the way to Him. You cannot connect with the Father of life in other way except through my teaching. Follow my teaching of love, and you'll get to know the Father.”

Philip said: “Show us the Father.” And Jesus said: “Don't you not know the Father? My teaching is that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me. Who will live by my teaching and follow my commandments, he'll get to know the Father. I will die, and worldly people won't see me, but my spirit will not die, and you will live by it. And then you'll realize that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.”

And Judas, not Iscariot but another one, said to him again: “Why will your spirit enter only us, but not all people?” And Jesus answered: “The Father loves him who follows my teaching, and my spirit lives in him. The Father does not love him who does not follow my teaching, and His spirit does not live in him. This teaching is not mine, but the Father's. That's all I can tell you for now. But my spirit, the spirit of truth, will enter you after me, and will open everything to you, and then you will remember and understand much of what I have told you. And when you'll understand that, you'll be peaceful, not by the worldly calmness with which worldly people become calm, but with such peacefulness of the spirit so that you will not fear anything anymore. You shouldn't grieve that I go away from you. I am going to the Father, and from Him, just like the spirit of truth, I will come back to you and will enter your heart. You should not grieve but rejoice in my death, because instead of me and my body, my spirit will be with you in your heart, and this is better for you.”

(John 14, 1-28)

Questions

1. What did Jesus say about the true life?
2. What did Jesus answer to the question of Thomas about what is the way?
3. What did Jesus respond to the request of Phillip to show the Father?
4. What will be the consolation to his disciples?
5. What did Jesus respond to the question of Judas, why the spirit of God will not enter all the people?
6. What will happen to those who will believe in the teaching of Jesus?

If you live according to my commandment of love and fulfill it, then you will have everything you want, because the will of the Father is so you have what you wish. As the Father gave me the blessing, so I give you the blessing. If you fulfill my commandment, just like I fulfill the Father's commandment, you'll be blessed. My commandment is that you love one another just as I loved you, so that you, out of love, are ready to sacrifice your physical life. You are equal to me if you do what I taught you. I don't consider you being slaves but I consider you being equal to me, because I have explained you everything I understood from the Father, so you can do the same as I did. I have given you the true teaching. And this teaching gives you the only true blessing. The entire teaching is to love each other.

If the world will hate you and chase you away, don't be surprised – the world hates my teaching. If you were at one with the world, it would love you. But I have separated you from the world, and because of that the world will hate and persecute you. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you. They cannot stop doing this, because they do not know the Father. I explained them who their Father is, but they didn't want to hear me. They have not understood my teaching because they did not understand what I told to them about the Father. And for that they hated me even more. I would tell you much more, but it's hard for you to understand me yet. But when the spirit of truth will enter you, it will show you all the truth, because it will tell you not something new, on its own, but what is from God, and it, in all cases of life, will show you the way. This spirit will tell you inside you the same thing that I tell.

(John 15, 7-26; 16, 12-15)

Questions

1. What will happen to those who will follow the commandments of Jesus?
2. What are the commandments and all the teaching about?

3. How will the worldly people treat the disciples of Jesus?
4. Why will the worldly people act that way?
5. Who will tell the disciples everything that Jesus did not have time to tell?

After that, Jesus raised his eyes to the sky and said: “My Father, you gave your son the freedom of life, so that he would receive the true life. Real life is the knowledge of the true God. And I have opened you to people. I have accomplished the matter you’ve entrusted me. They were yours even before, but according to your will I have opened them the truth that you're in them. And they came to know you. They realized that all that is in me, is also in them, and that all this is only from you. They have realized that all mine is yours, all yours is mine. I'm no longer in the world, and I'm coming to you, but they are in the world; and so I beg you, Father: keep them in truth. I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, I'm asking you to deliver them from lies, and strengthen them in your truth. So that they are all one; just as you, Father, are in me, and I am in you, so that they would get united in us. So that all would join in one, and so that people would understand that they are not born by themselves, but you have lovingly sent them into the world, just as you have sent me. Righteous Father! The world have not come to know you yet, but I have, and they have come to know you through me. And I have explained them that you, out of love to them, gave them their lives, so that your love to them would return back to you.”

(John 17, 1-26)

Questions

1. What is the true life?
2. What is it in Jesus' disciples, and in all people?

And after that Jesus got up and went with his disciples to the Mount of Olives. And on their way, he said to them: “Yes, time has come when, as it’s said in the Scripture, the shepherd will be killed, and the sheep will flee. And that’s what will happen with you. They’ll take me, and you will run away.” “No, I won’t run,” said Peter, “even if everybody else will flee, I will certainly not leave you. I’m ready to go with you everywhere, in prison or to death.” And Jesus said: “Do not boast ahead of time about what you will do. It may be that even tonight, before the roosters crow, you’ll deny me not once, but three times.” “I would never do that,” said Peter. The other disciples said the same. And when they came to the Gethsemane garden, Jesus told them: “Stay here for a while, I want to pray.” And he took with him only Peter and two Zebedee brothers. He said: “It is hard for me. Stay here with me.” And he walked a little away from them, laid on the ground, and began to pray. He said: “My Father! Deliver me from what awaits me.” Then he paused briefly and said, “Still, let it be not my will, but yours, and let it be not the way I want, but how you want it.” And then he got up and came over to the disciples. And the disciples fell asleep. Jesus woke them up and said: “Get stronger in spirit; only spirit is strong, but flesh is weak.” And again, Jesus left them, and began praying again, and said: “My Father! Let your will be done. Not my will, but yours.” And, having said that, again, he came to the disciples, and sees - they fell asleep again. And the third time, he went aside from them, and again said: “My Father! Let it be not my will, but your will.” Then he returned to the disciples, and said to them: “Now let’s go, I’m giving myself into the hands of the worldly people.”

(Matthew 26, 30-46)

Questions

1. What did Jesus tell on the way to Mount Olive?
2. What did Peter say, and what did Jesus answer?
3. How did Jesus pray in the Gethsemane garden?

4. What did he tell the disciples, up to three times?

And as soon as he said that, Judas Iscariot has appeared, and with him there were guards and servants of priests, with weapons and lights. And Judas immediately approached Jesus and said: "Hello, teacher!" And kissed him. And Jesus said to him, "My friend, what have you come for?" And then the guards surrounded Jesus and wanted to take him. But Peter snatched a knife from a priest's servant and cut off his right ear. And, having seen that, Jesus said to Peter: "Put your sword into the sheath. He who takes the sword will perish by the sword." And then Jesus addressed the people who came after him, and said: "Why did you come after me, armed, as if I was a robber? I was with you every day in the temple and taught you; why didn't you take me then?" Then, the commander told the soldiers to tie Jesus up. The soldiers tied him up and led him first to Caiaphas. It was that same Caiaphas who persuaded the Pharisees to kill Jesus, who said that it is better to kill one person than to allow all the nation perish. And they brought Jesus to the courtyard of his house. All Jesus' disciples ran away. Only one of them, Peter, went after Jesus and watched from afar where they lead him. When Jesus was brought to the courtyard of the high priest, Peter went in there, too, to see what will happen. And one woman in the courtyard saw Peter and asked him: "Aren't you also were with Jesus of Galilee?" And Peter got scared and, to avoid being accused together with Jesus, said: "I don't know what you're talking about." Then, when they brought Jesus into the house, Peter also went inside with the people. There was a fireplace, and another woman was warming up by the fire. When Peter came to the fire, the woman looked at him and said: "It seems that this man was with Jesus of Nazareth." Peter got scared even more and began to swear that he has never been with Jesus and did not know who he was. A little later, people approached Peter and said: "You look like one of those rebels. We can tell by your speech that you are from Galilee." Then Peter again began to swear that he has never even seen Jesus. As soon as he said that, a rooster crowed. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus that "Even tonight, before roosters' crow, you may deny me, not once, but three times." Peter remembered that and went out from the courtyard and wept bitterly.

(Matthew 26, 47-58, John 18, 12-14; Matthew 26, 69-75)

Questions

1. What did Judas do and say, and what did Jesus answer?
2. What did Peter do and what did Jesus say?
3. What did Jesus say to the people?
4. What did they do with Jesus, and where did they escort him?
5. What happened with Peter when he followed Jesus?

And the elders and the scribes gathered at the high priest's place. And when everyone has gathered, they brought Jesus there, and the high priest asked him what his teaching was about and who were his disciples. Jesus said: "I have always spoken before everyone and hid nothing from anyone. What do you ask me about? Ask those who have heard and understood my teaching, they will tell you." When Jesus said that, one of the guards struck Jesus on his face and said: "To whom are you talking? Is this the way to respond to the high priest?" Jesus said: "If I said something bad, tell me, what's wrong with what I said. And if I didn't say anything wrong, then why did you hit me?" The high priest and the elders tried to accuse Jesus, but did not find enough evidences to prosecute him. Then they found two false witnesses, and those witnesses said about Jesus as if he told that he would destroy the temple and build it again for three days. The high priest asked Jesus: "What do you say to this?" But Jesus said nothing. Then the high priest said to him: "So, tell me, you are the Christ, the son of God?" Jesus said: "Yes, I am the son of God." Then the high priest shouted: "You blaspheme against God. What other evidences do we need? You have all heard him blaspheme!" And the high priest addressed the Assembly and said: "Now you have heard by yourselves that he blasphemes against God. What do you charge him to?" And they all told: "To death." And then all the people in there, including guards, jumped on Jesus and began to spit in his face and beat him on his cheeks. They covered his eyes, slapped on his face, and asked: "Come on, the son of God, guess who hit you?" Jesus was silent.

(Mark 14, 53, John 18, 19-23; Matthew 26, 59-68)

Questions

1. What did the high priest ask Jesus about?
2. What did he answer?
3. What did one guard do?
4. What did Jesus tell him?

5. What did the false witnesses tell?
6. What did the high priest ask, and what did Jesus answer?
7. What did the high priest say, and what did they charge Jesus to?
8. How did they harass Jesus?

After that, they took Jesus to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate. When they brought him to Pilate, the governor came out on the porch and said those who brought him: “What do you accuse this man for?” They said: “He is a villain, that’s why we brought him to you.” Pilate said to them: “But if he’s a villain according to you, then punish him according to your law.” And they said: “We brought him to you so that you execute him, as we are not allowed to execute anyone to death.” Then Pilate asked them again what they accused him for. They said that he agitates people, forbids them to pay taxes to Caesar, and calls himself the king of Jews. Pilate listened to them and told them to bring Jesus to his judgment hall. When Jesus entered, Pilate asked him: “Are you the king of Jews?” Jesus said to him: “Are you asking this on your own or are you repeating what was told?” Pilate said: “I am not a Jew, but your people have brought you to me, and they accuse you for calling yourself the king.” Jesus said: “Yes, I am the king, but my kingdom is not the earthly one. If I were a worldly king, then my people would fight for me and wouldn’t let Jews to take me. But you can see what they did to me. My kingdom is not the earthly one.” Then Pilate said: “Still, do you consider yourself a king?” Jesus said: “I teach people the truth of the heavenly kingdom. And who lives the truth, he is the king.” Pilate said: “The truth? What is the truth?” And Pilate turned back to Jesus and went out again to the Jews and said to them: “In my opinion, this man has done nothing wrong and there is nothing to execute him for.” But the chief priests insisted and said that he is doing a lot of evil and rebels the people and has rebelled the entire Judea. Then Pilate began again to interrogate Jesus in front of the high priests. He said to Jesus: “You see that they charge you – how come you don’t defend yourself?” But Jesus kept silent and did not say a single word anymore, so that Pilate was astonished at him. Then Pilate remembered that Galilee belongs to Herod’s jurisdiction, and asked: “Isn’t he from Galilee?” He was told that Jesus was from Galilee, indeed. Then Pilate said: “If he is from Galilee, then he’s under Herod’s authority.” And, to get rid of the Jews, Pilate sent Jesus to Herod.

(John 18, 28-38; Luke 23, 2-7; Mark 15, 3-5)

Questions

1. How did they bring Jesus to Pilate?
2. What did Pilate say to the Jews, and what did they tell him?
3. What did Pilate say to Jesus and what did Jesus answer him?
4. What did Pilate say to the Jews, and that did they respond to him?
5. How did Pilate interrogate Jesus in front of Jews?
6. How did he send him to Herod?

And they have brought Jesus to Herod. Herod heard a lot about Jesus and was now glad to see him. Herod called Jesus to come closer and began to question him about all he wanted to know. But Jesus didn't answer him anything. And the chief priests and scribes, just like they did before Pilate, and now before Herod, accused Jesus in all crimes and told that he was a rebel. But Herod took Jesus for an empty person, and to make fun of him, ordered to put a red dress on him, and in that clown dress sent him back to Pilate. When the second time they brought Jesus to Pilate, Pilate again called the leaders of Jews and said to them: "You have already brought this man to me for agitating the people, and I interrogated him in front of you, and I do not see him being a rebel. I sent him with you to Herod, and here you can see that nothing dangerous was found about him. And, in my opinion, there is nothing to execute him to death for, wouldn't it be better to whip him up and let him go?" When they have heard this, they all shouted: "No, execute him, as Romans do: crucify him on the cross!" Pilate heard them and said: "Well, only there is a tradition on Easter to forgive one of the villains. We had one, the murderer Barabbas, sentenced to death, and now we've got this one. So, one of the two can be released. Who to let go, Jesus or Barabbas?" Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the high priests have influenced the people so that everybody shouted: "Barabbas, Barabbas!" Then Pilate asked: "And what to do with Jesus?" And they all screamed again: "The Roman way, at the cross, at the cross!" Pilate did not want to execute Jesus, and he again began to persuade the high priests, to let Jesus go. He said: "Why are you against him so much? He did not do any evil, there is nothing to execute him for." But the chief priests and their servants again screamed: "Execute, execute, the Roman way! Crucify, crucify him!" Then Pilate said to them: "If so, then take him and execute him yourself, and I don't see any guilt in him." And the chief priests said: "We demand to follow the law. By law, he should be executed for calling himself the son of God." Then Pilate, having heard these words, got confused, because he don't know what the words "son of God" mean. And, having returned to the judgment hall, he called Jesus again and asked him: "Who are you and where are you from?" But Jesus didn't

answer him. Pilate said: “Why don’t you answer me? Don't you see that you are in my power, and that I can crucify or let you go?” Then Jesus said to him: “No, you do not have any authority over me. The only authority is from above.”

(Luke 23, 8-16; Matthew 27, 15-23, John 19, 6-11)

Questions

1. How did Herod question Jesus and how did Jesus behave?
2. How did they bring Jesus back to Pilate, and what did Pilate want to do with him, and what did Jews want?
3. How did Pilate try to help Jesus, what did the Jews demand?
4. How did Pilate question Jesus again, and what did Jesus answer him?

Pilate wanted to release Jesus so much that he again began to speak to people and said: “How come you want to crucify your king?” But the Jews said to him: “If you'll let Jesus go, then by doing this you'll show that you are a bad servant to Caesar, because the one who makes himself a king is the enemy of Caesar. We have one Caesar, so crucify this king.” And when Pilate heard these words, he realized that he could no longer avoid executing Jesus. Then Pilate went out to the Jews, poured water on his hands in front of them and said: “I'm washing my hands from the blood of this innocent man.” And the people shouted: “Let his blood be on us and on our children.” And then Pilate commanded first to whip Jesus out. When they whipped him, the soldiers who did that put a wreath on his head and gave a stick into his hands and put a red cloak on his back and began to mock him. Mocking him, they bowed to him and told: "Hail, the king of Jews!" And some of them beat him on his cheeks and on his head and spat in his face. And everybody was screaming: “Crucify him! Our King is the Emperor. Crucify him!” And after that Pilate ordered to crucify Jesus. They took the red clothes off Jesus, put his own dress on and told him to carry the cross to Golgotha, the place of a skull (*), to crucify him. And he was carrying his cross, and that way he came to Golgotha. And they crucified him there on the cross, and two other people were crucified with him. Those two were on each side and Jesus was in the middle of them. Jesus said: “Father! Forgive them, they don't know what they do.”

(* the place of a skull – was a hill, where they read royal decrees and sometimes carried out executions. Golgotha was on a hill near Jerusalem (now the word Golgotha is used as a synonym for martyrdom, suffering, e.g.: ascend the Golgotha). *)

(John 19, 12-18; Matthew 27, 24-31; Luke 23, 34)

Questions

1. How did Pilate stand for Jesus and what did the Jews answer him?

2. What did Pilate order to do to Jesus?
3. How did they lead Jesus to the place of a skull and how did they crucify him?

And when Jesus was already hanging on the cross, people surrounded him and cursed him. People came to him, nodded to him, and told: “Well, you wanted to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem in three days, and in three days to build the new one. Come on now, rescue yourself, come down from the cross!” And the chief priests and the scribes stood nearby and also laughed at him and told: “You saved others, but cannot save yourself. Show us now that you are the Christ, come down from the cross, and then we will believe you.” “He said that he is the son of God, and said that God would not leave him. What about now – has God left him?” And people, and the chief priests, and soldiers laughed at him. And one of the robbers crucified next to him, told the same: “If you are the Christ, then save yourself and us as well.” But another robber heard this and said: “Aren’t you’re afraid of God, you are hanging on the cross yourself for the wrong deeds, but are laughing over the innocent. You and I are punished for a reason, but this man did nothing wrong.” In the ninth hour, Jesus spoke in a loud voice: “My God, my God! Why have you left me?” And when people heard that, they began to talk and laugh: “He is calling Ilya the Prophet! Let’s see how Ilya will come.” Then Jesus asked: “Drink!” And one person took a sponge, soaked it in vinegar and passed it to Jesus on a stick. Jesus sucked the sponge and said in a loud voice: “It’s over! Father, I give my spirit in your hands!” And he bowed his head, and let go of spirit.

(Matthew 27, 39-44; Luke 23, 39-41; Matthew 27, 46-49, John 19, 28-30)

Questions

1. How did they bully over Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say before he died?